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Betsy Ross Descendants in Indiana

[Since these descendants have been traced some of them, it is probable, have changed their locations.]

THE story of the first Stars and Stripes has been repeatedly told in periodical literature, though if one refers to the general histories, it is surprising how little is found. Even the "Archives of Pennsylvania" and "Watson's Annals of Philadelphia," which aim to rescue from oblivion all the minor events of interest, tell us nothing of the woman who lived and died and made the first flags for the Union in Philadelphia. The Story, told briefly, is as follows:

In June of 1777 the American Congress adopted our national flag of thirteen stripes and thirteen stars. The very first one made embodying this design was the handiwork of sundry patriotic ladies of Philadelphia, and it was flung to the breeze from the mast-head of Commodore Paul Jone's ship, the *Ranger*. In this flag the stars were six-pointed. Then a committee was appointed by Congress to select an official flag maker.

This committee, accompanied by General Washington, waited on Mrs. John Ross, a young woman noted for her skill in needlework, and a niece, by marriage, to Colonel George Ross, one of the committee. Washington drew the design of the flag for her, but she objected to the six-pointed star, terming it a "British" star. Folding a piece of paper, she produced one of five points, as preferable. The amendment was accepted, and such a star it has been since.

There, in a little brick house built two centuries ago and still standing (unless recently torn down) in Arch street, Philadelphia, the earliest flags used by the nation were made. The first of these floated over Washington's victorious army when Burgoyne surrendered in October, 1777. Among the relics that have been preserved is an official order to pay Betsy Ross £14 12s 2d for making flags for the fleet in the Delaware river.

Betsy Ross was married three times, her last husband being John Claypole. Three daughters are mentioned, at least two of whom were full sisters, Claypole by name. These two sisters represent two lines of descendants. One of the branches, tracing

its ancestry to Clarissa Sidney Claypole, has members in Philadelphia, New Orleans, Charleston, S. C., and in Indianapolis, the latter being Mrs. J. L. Jackson and her children.

The other branch, which has been traced by Mrs. M. C. Thayer, of Indianapolis, daughter of James Conwell, has contributed considerably to the population of this State. Rebekah Walpole, the other sister, married Abraham Conwell, and four grandsons of this couple—James, William, Isaac and A. B. Conwell, came to Indiana at an early day. All settled in the Whitewater region—James in Franklin county, near where Laurel now stands; William at Cambridge City; Isaac at Liberty, and A. B. at Connersville. All were merchants and successful business men.

James Conwell, who was married twice, had a large family, chiefly daughters. Of these no less than eight married in Indiana, and their children and grandchildren are to be found in a number of Indiana towns. So far as we can determine, there are in Richmond, 2—Mrs. C. S. W. Ross and her daughter, Miss Ella Ross; in Fairland, Franklin County, 9—Louise Burnside, Lynn Burnside and three children, Mrs. Winnie B. Carson and two children, and Mrs. Nora B. Enyart; in Rushville, 9—Mrs. Fannie Smith, Dr. Will Smith and one child, Walter Smith, Mrs. John Frazee and two children, Mrs. Will Percy and one child; in Indianapolis, 8—Mrs. Maria C. Thayer and daughter, Miss Laurel Thayer, Mrs. J. C. Smith and three children, and Mrs. J. E. Fish and one child; in Anderson, 3—Mrs. Charles T. Doxey, Thomas N. Stillwell and Horace Stillwell. Of the William Conwell branch there is one grandson at Portland. Of the Isaac Conwell branch there are two daughters—Ann Rebecca Conwell and Mrs. Mary Jones, in Anderson, and Dr. Horace Jones, Dr. William Jones and a sister, either at Anderson or Noblesville.

A. B. Conwell, the fourth of the pioneer brothers, who settled in Connersville, is now represented there by not less than twelve descendants—one daughter, Mrs. Anna Merrill; four grandchildren, John Merrill, William Merrill, Conwell Merrill and their sister, and seven great-grandchildren. There is also another sister, a Mrs. Havens, in Rushville.

In addition to these we are informed of Mrs. Andrew J. King

and her son, G. Ray King, of Brookville.

In tracing this family tree, it is interesting to note that individuals of musical and poetic talent have cropped out all along the line, and in the Clarissa Claypool branch there has been at least one representative in each generation who seems to have inherited Betsey Ross's talent for needlework.

Revolutionary Soldiers in Indiana

IN our last issue we published an article on the Revolutionary soldiers who ended their days in Putnam County, this State. Apropos to the subject we here reprint from the *Indianapolis News* a condensed account of Revolutionary graves in southern Indiana as located by the researches of Piankeshaw Chapter, D. A. R.

"Piankeshaw Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, of New Albany has been one of the most active chapters in the State in marking the graves of Revolutionary soldiers. The members have been for several years delving into village cemeteries and private burial lots to discover these graves, and at the present time a total of thirty have been found in Floyd and the adjoining counties. Harrison county leads with nineteen; Floyd has six; Washington, two, and Crawford, Scott and Orange one each. A cluster of Revolutionary graves was found in Clark county, and with the organization of Anne Rogers Clark Chapter, at Jeffersonville, Piankeshaw Chapter courteously placed the graves under the care of that chapter. Of the nine graves in Floyd county, four are in Fairview cemetery, New Albany. They are the last resting-places of Joseph Bell, a light infantryman, who fought seven years in the Continental army.

"He was born in Pennsylvania and moved to New Albany in 1818, dying in 1848, at the age of ninety years. Not far from his grave is that of Joshua Fowler, who died March 18, 1820. On his headstone is the inscription, "A Patriot of the Revolution." In another grave rests Richard Lord Jones, who enlisted at the age of thirteen years as a drummer. He was born in Connecticut in 1761, and died in this city in 1852. The last of the four is